

MISSOURI SECRETARY OF STATE JASON KANDER



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Wolfner Talking Book and Braille Library Strategic Plan, 2013–2018 Library Mission

The mission of Wolfner Talking Book and Braille Library is to provide informational and recreational materials in Braille and audio formats free of charge to Missourians who are unable to use standard print materials due to blindness, visual or physical impairment, or a reading disability. Wolfner Library also provides disability-related information to the public.

Planning Process

This strategic planning process began in the spring of 2012 with a contract awarded to AVANT Marketing Group to assist in developing the plan. Over the summer, surveys and interviews from library users, the Wolfner Advisory council, and staff contributed to the development of a preliminary plan with suggested initiatives. Wolfner staff continued to work with those initiatives and subsequently developed goals. On January 17, 2013, a half-day all-staff planning meeting identified objectives for each goal. A final draft of the Strategic Plan followed.

Library Profile

Wolfner Talking Book and Braille Library is a member of a national network of cooperating libraries that provide free library service to those unable to read standard print materials. The network was established in 1931 by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) of the Library of Congress, with Wolfner Library as one of the original 19 libraries. Wolfner continues to play a leading role in that national network, now consisting of 56 regional libraries.

Wolfner Library circulates over a half million items to more than 10,000 active individual Missourians and close to 2,000 institutions. The materials circulated include braille, cassette and digital audiobooks, magazines, large print books, descriptive videos and DVDs. Staff responds to over 21,000 inquiries made by phone, letter, e-mail, and visits.

Wolfner Library makes numerous efforts to be pro-active in satisfying Missourians' voracious reading needs. The library's duplication department downloads hundreds of NLS produced titles from the Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) website, making thousands of copies of those titles. Wolfner also participates in a nationwide download program of locally recorded titles called the SHELF program.

Wolfner patrons, both youth and adult, participate in yearly statewide reading programs, with the youth program sharing a theme with public libraries throughout Missouri. Staff create bibliographies of recommended readings, and provide online versions of those bibliographies for nationwide usage. The library has an active volunteer program that records youth and adult books of Missouri interest to supplement NLS materials.

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

The following are goals for the next five years. These goals represent areas of focus and outcomes Wolfner Library wants to achieve. The achievement of each goal will move the organization toward realization of its mission.

The goals are not listed in priority order. Objectives provide direction on how the organization will accomplish its articulated goals. Wolfner staff will provide strategies for accomplishing the objectives, which will be reviewed periodically. Progress toward goals will be documented separately.

Goal Area: Outreach and Awareness

Goal: Wolfner Library will improve awareness of and access to the library, both physically and virtually.

Objectives:

1. Build community partnerships with local agencies.
Develop partnerships with 2 new agencies each year.
2. Increase social media presence.
Increase Facebook postings to 2 a week by mid-2013. Explore Twitter and YouTube presence by end of 2013.
3. Increase visibility through traditional media advertising, such as radio ads.
Conduct 4 radio interviews each year; include television interviews if available.
4. Create and make available promotional materials at state and national conferences.
5. Demonstrate need for a full-time outreach employee.
Conduct research by the end of 2015.

Goal Area: Patron Services

Goal: Wolfner Library will provide services and resources to meet the informational and recreational needs of all patrons.

Objectives:

1. Ensure optimal service to patrons by promptly filling vacant professional positions that provide direct service to patrons.
Fill open positions within 2 months of vacancy when at all possible.
2. Better inform new patrons of the full range of available services.
Develop checklist of services for Reader Advisor use by 2014.
3. Develop better methods of communicating changes in and additions to services for existing patrons.
Develop policy by 2014.
4. Ensure that staff are aware of and thoroughly understand the full range of available services, including additions to and changes in existing services.
Hold regular meetings with public services staff.

Goal Area: Technology

Goal: Wolfner Library will continually monitor and promote technologies of benefit to the low-vision community.

Objectives:

1. Have applicable new technologies available to all staff and provide timely training to all staff on those technologies.
 - i. Yearly review of new technologies. Attend PowerUp yearly.
2. Pursue mobile device technology and applications.
3. Work closely with the SOS IT department to help them better understand Wolfner's unique and specialized equipment and software needs.
 - i. Regular meetings and communications between IT and Wolfner.

4. Participate in improvements and upgrades to the KLAS integrated library system (ILS) and investigate alternative ILS that might better meet the needs of Wolfner patrons and staff.
 - i. Participate in yearly survey KLAS conducts. Investigate alternative ILS by 2014.
5. Expand recording capacity by building additional recording booths.
 - i. Submit budget proposal by 2014.

Goal Area: Organizational Topics

Goal: Wolfner Library will examine internal organizational practices and processes in order to improve services to patrons.

Objectives:

1. Attend state and national conferences in order to learn about and support Missouri interests in national services and trends in library services for people with disabilities.

Attend yearly conferences for MLA, MASL, NLS, ALA, MCB, NFB, KLAS as funding allows.
2. Maintain NLS recommended staffing levels in order to ensure that the library can meet and exceed the most basic levels of service.

As vacancies occur.
3. Develop internal communications processes in order to keep all staff fully informed.

Develop immediately and review yearly.
4. Create formal policies and procedures manual that can be accessed by all staff.

Draft by the end of 2013.
5. Develop a new staff training program and a cross training program for existing staff.

By 2014
6. Develop uniform policies and procedures related to patron services, such as Newsline, on demand duplication and SHELF.

By 2014

Goal Area: Collection Management

Goal: Wolfner Library will develop a strong and current collection of materials to meet the informational and recreational needs of patrons.

Objectives:

1. Expand subject areas collected to include Missouri specific materials, foreign languages study, Christian fiction, radio plays, and self-help books.

New titles will be sought weekly through reading of professional review sources (eg- Booklist, Publishers Weekly) and examination of appropriate online sources. Informal input from patrons will be solicited regularly. Investigate alternative sources and formats for audiobooks, such as Playaways and audible.com.
2. Investigate alternatives for reading materials to better serve the learning disability community.

By 2014